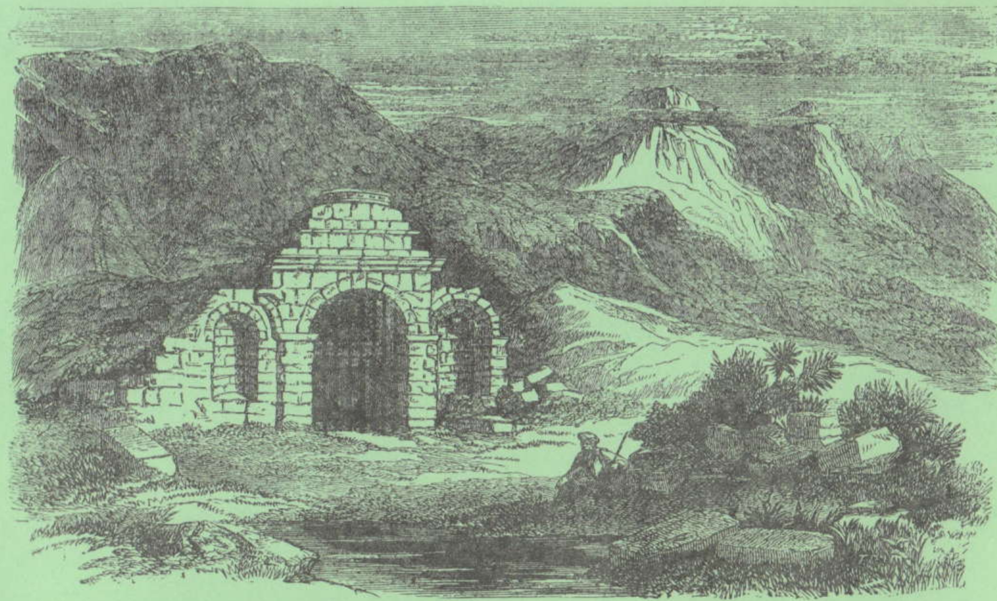
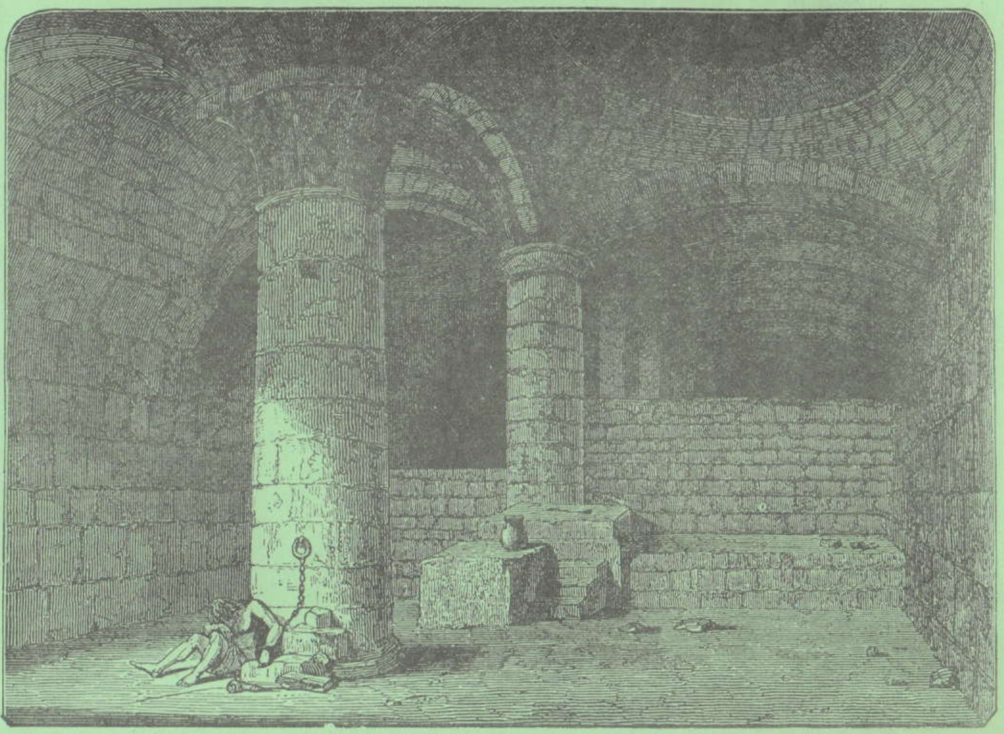


colossal adventure



COLOSSAL ADVENTURE

Colossal Cavern is a name of power, whispered in dark corners, embodying incredible riches and untold danger. Sensible folk hold this cave to be a myth, the product of fevered imaginations - but every year a handful of people set out to find it, driven by necessity or by overwhelming greed.

Most return empty-handed with tales of fruitless wanderings, or lies about the dangers faced: volcanos, dragons, gigantic snakes and the like. But some have never returned, and speculation holds that they are the successful ones who have found the cave and perished - or maybe used the enormous wealth from it to found great empires in far-off lands where they live in luxury.

Thus it is a unique event when a travel-stained warrior enters the tavern where you are sitting one evening, pays the inn-keeper with an absurdly high value gold coin, and over his drink claims that he has visited Colossal Cavern - and escaped with his life!

The other drinkers flatly disbelieve him, "thief" and "mercenary" are two of their more flattering suggestions to explain his wealth, but you are not so sure - for he has a haunted look and refuses to discuss his exploits. Thus, when you realise that an ambush is being planned to deprive the stranger of his money (and life), you lead him out to safety by a back route.

"A thousand thanks!", he exclaims when the sounds of pursuit finally die away, "May the Gods smile upon you for your deed tonight! But I fear that your friends may seek revenge if you return."

"Thus, to reward you for your valour, I will give you the most valuable treasure that I own... the location of Colossal Cavern!", and he presses a crumpled scrap of paper into your palm. Frankly, you were expecting hard cash - and a lot of it - but he looks like a good man in a fight, so you accept the meagre reward and even manage to shake his hand warmly.

Despite your natural suspicions that the map may be a fake, it would be foolish to stay and face the wrath of your fellows, so you set out to follow it. And the map turns out to be genuine! It leads you through uncharted lands: over mountains, through forests and skirting deserts - always avoiding the inhabited places of the earth - until one day's journey would bring you to Colossal Cavern itself.

Then disaster strikes. You are leaning on the wall of a building from which a river emerges and follows the road south. To the north is open country and all around is dense forest. As you attempt to decipher the next part of the map, a freak gust of wind lifts it from your hand - and carries it into the water. Rescue is not possible for the river sucks it down instantly, and in any case you cannot swim.

The next part is up to you: to find the Cavern, enter it, and return with its treasure. And, as you stand thinking, you remember a scrawled note on the margin of the map:

"Warning, Magic works in the Cavern!"

The Game

Colossal Adventure is a complete, full scale version of the original classic mainframe game "Adventure", possibly the most popular and addictive computer game ever produced. You will encounter all of the creatures, treasures and locations that you will have seen hinted at in readers' letters to computer magazines.

Just to keep you on your toes if you have played another such adventure, one of the treasures has been moved and a vitally needed object has been hidden, but it is an entirely faithful implementation apart from this.

But when you qualify for the end-game by finding all of the treasures, it is another matter entirely. The standard end-game is rather limited, with only two locations, so we have added a complete new, unique end-game to Colossal Adventure: with over 70 locations! Don't feel let down when you've solved the first part of the game - the play continues!!

To play Colossal Adventure you simply enter English phrases to tell the computer what you want to do (e.g. MOVE NORTH, FILL THE BOTTLE, or LOOK AROUND), and it acts as your eyes and ears to describe your surroundings.

In fact, Colossal Adventure is amazingly easy to play - you don't need to be able to find the cursor keys blindfold, or hammer the space-bar for hours. But it may take weeks to solve - and, be warned, you could get so absorbed in the game that you just do not notice time passing!

How to Load and Start

This adventure game is for the Amstrad CPC 464. To load and start, type the following and press ENTER:

RUN""

Put the cassette in your datacorder and press PLAY and ENTER. When the title page has loaded, press ENTER again. Then the game will load quickly and start automatically (there's a copy on each side of the tape).

Loading Advice

We test cassettes thoroughly and few people should have any difficulties in loading our games. If you do have any problems, however, the following may help:

1. Try the other side of the cassette.
2. Clean and demagnetise the datacorder, following Amstrad's instructions.
3. You may really have a bad cassette. As a last resort, return it under guarantee to get a replacement (just return the cassette, it costs more in postage if you return the box as well).

Instructions

Unlike our other games, Level 9 adventures contain no instructions within the program. We felt that this type of game was very easy to play - and that the space would be better used for more rooms and treasures.

The program asks you "What next?" whenever it expects you to enter another command. Simply type an English phrase to tell it what you want to do and press ENTER. The program will then act on your request, ask you for the next command, and so on.

Please ignore the keywords etc marked on and around the keys of your Spectrum. If you want to read a magazine, for example, you should type READ in full. However you are allowed to abbreviate words to save typing. See on . . .

Now, at this point, we must admit that the program does not really understand English (no program does, despite claims in press adverts) but it does have a large vocabulary of English words. Thus it can behave as if it knows the language by analysing each entered phrase, picking out the words that it knows, and guessing the meaning of the phrase from these. Words that it does not understand are ignored.

In practice, this works well and you should find it simple to state what you want to do: if the computer does not understand, re-phrase your request.

Colossal Adventure provides great freedom in possible commands, but to help you get started some of the possible instructions are summarised below:

Word	**Example**	**Meaning**
EAST	MOVE EAST	Move east, if possible.
NORTHWEST	TRY NORTHWEST	Move northwest.
INTO	WALK INTO THE CAVE	Move into the cave.
TAKE	TAKE THE COINS	Take something.
DROP	DROP PYRAMID	Drop something carried.
SCORE	WHAT'S MY SCORE	How well am I doing ?
INVENTORY	INVENTORY	What am I carrying ?

It should be emphasised that these are only a small sample of the words known by the program and, in general, if you want to do something just type what it is in simple language and see if the program lets you do it.

To save typing, words can be abbreviated (e.g. EAST to E and NORTHEAST to NE).

There are three special commands which are nothing to do with playing the game, but are commands to the program. These are:

Command	**Meaning**
QUIT	Abandon the game, returning to Basic. You have to answer a YES/NO question to check that you-mean it, first..
SAVE	Save the current state of the game on tape. Enter SAVE (as S; A; V; E; ENTER) and then place one of your cassettes in your recorder and press SPACE, for example, to start the saving of the state-of-play onto it.
RESTORE	Restore a previously saved game, so that you can carry on playing. After typing restore, you should play back the cassette holding the saved data.

Scoring

You score points for finding treasures, but only get the full points if you carry them back to the building. You also score points for entering Colossal Cavern at all, and lose points if you are killed.

There are a few bonuses as well, including one for not using SAVE/-RESTORE, and in order to become a Grandmaster you need a maximum score - including these.

To reach the end-game, and so have the opportunity for high scoring, you must have found all of the treasures. If you can't get to the end-game, there must be at least one treasure that you have not seen, therefore.

Hints

You are entitled to one free clue, and a SAE is enclosed so that you can send any one question to us at Level 9, and we will try to return the answer by the next post. Don't use up the clue too soon - you may waste it on something that you'll work out yourself while the reply is in the post. Answers will be truthful, but specific questions have the best chance of resulting in a simply-understood reply; and if you ask "How do I win?" for example, the reply will be vague in the extreme!

Almost everything in Colossal Adventure has a purpose.

A magic word is needed to get at one of the treasures. To make it possible to guess this, it is included in a room description.

Implementation

You may be wondering how Colossal Adventure has been crammed into only 32K, after all there is one version that runs in 120K bytes on a mainframe computer with disks. And it has fewer rooms! In fact, including the operating system, this version must need nearly half a megabyte of store - but it is written in FORTRAN.

Colossal Adventure is not written in ASSEMBLER or BASIC, either of these would have made it too big - and BASIC would also have been too slow. Instead it is written in a super-compact language known as 'a-code', which is specially designed for the job.

Similarly, the text messages output by the program have been compressed by a 'data compiler' to a fraction of their original size.

Together, these two means of size reduction - combined with tight coding - allow Colossal Adventure to run in an extremely small size.

Other Products

Colossal Adventure was produced by, and is Copyright © of Level 9 Computing. If you enjoyed this game and want details of other Level 9 products (games AND utilities) then please write to:

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